

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 YAOUND 04702 081155Z

20

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ARA-06 IO-13 OMB-01 ACDA-07 /093 W

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P R 081120Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 420

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

C O N F I D E N T I A L YAOUNDE 4702

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, EK, CM

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT AHIDJO CONCERNED ABOUT SOVIET PENETRATION
CENTRAL AFRICA

REF: (A) YAOUNDE 4568 (B) YAOUNDE 4552 (C) YAOUNDE 2426

(D) YAOUNDE 2417 (ALL NOTAL)

1. AMBASSADOR SPIRO HAS BEEN VISITING NORTH WEST PROVINCE SINCE DEC 3, GIVING TALKS BAMENDA AND BAMBUI (CCAST). SHORTLY AFTER HIS DEPARTURE DCM WAS INFORMED THAT PRESIDENT AHIDJO WAS PREPARED RECEIVED AMBASSADOR DEC 4. CHECK WITH PROTOCOL AS TO WHETHER AMBASSADOR SHOULD BE CALLED BACK INDICATED THAT MEETING NOT URGENT AND COULD AWAIT HIS NORMAL RETURN.

2. DEC 7 DCM REQUESTED BY FRENCH AMBASSADOR DUBOIS CALL ON HIM CONCERNING MEETING WHICH DUBOIS HAD WITH PRESIDENT AHIDJO ON 4TH. DUBOIS SAID PRES AHIDJO HAD WANTED SEE HIM AND AMBASSADOR SPIRO TO EXPRESS CONCERN ABOUT RUSSIAN AND CUBAN PLANS IN CENTRAL AFRICA.

3. DUBOIS HAS BEEN ASKED BY AHIDJO TO PASS HIS REMARKS ALONG
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 YAOUND 04702 081155Z

TO HIS AMERICAN COLLEAGUE AND REQUEST OUR ASSESSMENT OF

RUSSIAN AND CUBAN INTENTIONS THIS AREA. DUBOIS REQUESTED OUR CONVERSATION BE KEPT STRICTLY BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS. AHIDJO CONVERSATION WITH DUBOIS FROM LATTER'S ACCOUNT MUST HAVE BEEN ALMOST EXACT REPLAY OF JULY 5 CONVERSATION WHICH AMBASSADOR HAD WITH PRESIDENCY SECRETARY GENERAL EBOUA (REFTELS C AND D) AND OUR NOV 26 CONVERSATION WITH FONMIN KEUTCHA (REFTELS A AND B). IN ADDITION CONCERN ABOUT GENERAL INSTABILITY IN AREA, AHIDJO STRESSED PARTICULAR DISQUIETUDE ABOUT RECENT LARGE QUANTITY RUSSIAN ARMS SHIPMENT CHAD, GENERAL SOVIET INFLUENCE NIGERIA, RUSSIAN AND CUBAN PRESENCE CONGO (BRAZZAVILLE) AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, RUSSIAN AND CUBAN PRESENCE EQUATORIAL GUINEA.

4. AHIDJO (AND PERHAPS THIS WAS DUBOIS' INTERPRETATION) SAW ONLY FOUR STABLE COUNTRIES CENTRAL AND WEST AFRICA: CAMEROON, GABON, IVORY COAST (FYI: HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY EXPECTED VISIT FIRST OF YEAR), AND SENEGAL. ACCORDING DUBOIS, AHIDJO NOT PARTICULARLY OVERCONCERNED ABOUT RECENT BORDER PROBLEMS WITH GABON, BUT WITH LONG-RANGE SOVIET PLANS SUBVERT THESE STABLE REGIMES, PERHAPS BY USING CUBAN SURROGATES. DUBOIS INDICATED AHIDJO PREOCCUPATION WITH WHAT RUSSIANS HAD ACCOMPLISHED IN ANGOLA AND THEIR ATTEMPT THROUGH ZIMBABWE GUERRILLAS HAVE BELT ACROSS SOUTHERN AFRICA AND POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS THIS MIGHT HAVE FOR RUSSIAN PLANS DUPLICATE SITUATION THIS AREA.

5. AHIDJO PARTICULARLY WORRIED ABOUT EQUATORIAL GUINEA. HE VIEWS MACIE AS UNSTABLE LEADER OF UNSTABLE REGIME. AHIDJO BELIEVED THERE UP TO 1,000 CUBANS THERE AND HE NOT SURE WHAT LARGE CUBAN PRESENCE WITH RUSSIAN SUPPORT UP TO. AHIDJO APPEARED BELIEVE CUBAN TROOPS COULD BE TRANSFERRED FROM ANGOLA TO EQUATORIAL GUINEA IN ORDER CREATE INSTABILITY GABON AND CAMEROON.

6. DUBOIS WONDERED HOW UNITED STATES VIEWED SITUATION PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT EG. DCM OBSERVED FRENCH HAD EMBASSY IN MALABO AND WE HAD NO REPRESENTATION. DUBOIS COUNTERED THAT THEY RECEIVED NO INFORMATION ON CURRENT STATE OF CUBAN - RUSSIAN INTENTIONS. DCM SAID IN PERSONAL VIEW IT APPEARED CURRENT DIFFICULTIES SPANISH, GABONESE AND CAMEROONIANS IN EG MERELY CONTINUATION OF EXISTING SITUATION DUE PARTICULAR
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 YAOUND 04702 081155Z

EVENTS INVOLVING PRESS STORIES, OVERFLIGHTS, ETC. AND DID NOT APPEAR INDICATED QUANTUM ESCALATION OF INSTABILITY MACIE REGIME. ALSO NUMBERS OF CUBANS E.G. APPEARED EXCESSIVE. HOWEVER, DEPARTMENT WOULD BE QUERIED WITH RESPECT ITS VIEW CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN AREA AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE.

7. COMMENT: IT OBVIOUS CAMEROON WORRIED ABOUT EQUATORIAL GUINEA WHEN BOTH FONMIN AND PRESIDENT SEE FIT UNBURDEN THEIR CONCERNS

ON FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVES. IN THIS CONNECTION, IT MUST BE OBSERVED THAT BELIEVE THERE IS STRONG INFERENCE THAT CAMEROONIAN SENIOR OFFICIALS HAVE FEELING THAT EG POLICIES ARE MORE AND MORE BEING UIDED BY RUSSIANS AND PERHAPS THEIR CUBAN SURROGATES. AT NO RPT NO POINT WAS SUBJECT OF CAMEROONIAN ARMS REQUESTS OF ANY COUNTRY MENTIONED.

8. PRESIDENT AHIDJO HAS GONE TO NORTH CAMEROON UNTIL NEXT WEEK. EMBASSY WILL ATTEMPT COME UP WITH WHAT ADDITIONAL INFO AVAILABLE LOCALLY ON EVENTS EG. IN MEANTIME, WOULD APPRECIATE ANY THOUGHTS WHICH DEPARTMENT MAY HAVE ON RUSSIAN-CUBAN DESIGNS THIS AREA, PARTICULARLY CAMEROON. SPIRO

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